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FM REO BASRAH
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0336
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC
RUEHBC/REO BASRAH 0355

C O N F I D E N T I A L BASRAH 000072

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 5/8/2016
TAGS: [PTER](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [IZ](#)
SUBJECT: BRITISH HELO CRASH IN BASRAH

CLASSIFIED BY: Kenneth E. Gross, Regional Coordinator, Basrah
Regional Embassy Office, Department of State.
REASON: 1.4 (d)

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1. (C) Summary: On the afternoon of May 6, a British Lynx helicopter with five individuals was shot down as it departed the Basrah Palace Compound (BPC). The helicopter crashed in the city and hostile crowds hampered the subsequent recovery effort by British forces. The city was under curfew during the evening of May 6-7, and no major incidents occurred overnight. The missing body of the fifth casualty was discovered on May 7 under the helicopter when it was removed by the British military. End Summary.

2, (C) The Deputy Regional Coordinator (DRC) witnessed a trajectory of a missile fired from the opposite side of the Shatt al-Arab River that hit the Lynx soon after it departed the landing zone on the British side of the BPC. The Lynx crashed in a middle class neighborhood of Basrah, close to the residence of a Basrah Regional Embassy Office (REO) local staff member. She reported hostile crowds attacked British forces that had arrived on the scene and attempted to loot houses in the area. A QRF was launched by Triple Canopy (TC) in the event that there were Americans on board the downed helicopter. Once the REO confirmed that no Americans had been on board, the QRF returned to the REO. Subsequently, the 17th U.K. Battle Group Commander requested assistance from the REO for Hurst extraction equipment. TC vehicles and personnel with the equipment escorted by British military vehicles went to the crash site. Upon arrival, however, the British military told TC that the equipment was not needed, and TC returned without incident to the REO.

3. (C) Although May 7 has been relatively calm, the Basrah Governor requested that the press conference to announce the end of the British boycott (septel) be moved from the Provincial Council building to the British Consulate. Before the press event began, U.K. Brigadier General James Everard told the Regional Coordinator that the wreckage of the helicopter had been removed and the missing body of the fifth casualty was found underneath it. The crash scene remained quiet on May 7, with no reports of incidents between the British military and Basrah residents.

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